

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

March 24, 1997

MEMORANDUM FOR GEORGE J. TENET
JOHN P. WHITE
Co-Chairmen, Security Policy Board

SUBJECT: Implementation of Executive Order 12968

The President has approved the Adjudicative Guidelines, Temporary Eligibility Standards and investigative Standards required by Executive order 12968, which you submitted in draft May 28, 1996. Attached are the final documents.

The Security Policy Board is requested to circulate the approved Guidelines and Standards for immediate implementation, with this memorandum attached. Within one year of circulation, the Board should furnish to the President, through the National Security Advisor, a report on the effectiveness and efficiency of these Guidelines and Standards, compliance by departments and agencies with them and any adjustments needed.

Since application of the "whole person concept" in adjudicating persons eligible for national security clearances depends on both information the subject furnishes in the SF-86 background form and the separate investigation to verify portions of that information, it is important that the scope of both provide a sufficient basis for decision. Your work in modifying the investigative scope to fit the most cost-effective Model can have the desired effect, provided we do not also unnecessarily limit the scope of the SF-86 form and personal interview. The SF-86 provided by first time applicants should cover the entire adult life, fully documenting the essential factors on which an adjudication will be made. The separate investigation independently confirms selected evidence of eligibility, generally from the most recent time frame. Therefore, the SF-86 scope should be as broad as possible, while the investigation's scope complies with the Standards for efficiency.

In redrafting the SF-86 to fit the new Guidelines and Standards, you should include relevant data from the entire adult life span for first time applicants, to ensure a sufficiently documented baseline for adjudication.

While I understand that the Adjudicative Guidelines have been circulated widely, the Investigative Standards have not, because that might facilitate attempts to evade detection of disqualifying factors. The Standards are not classified, but should have limited dissemination, consistent with background investigative practice.

Since the President approved Executive order 12968, it has been brought to my attention that some departments and agencies have continued reducing resources devoted to counterintelligence and security activities. In some cases, the downsizing of these functions may be disproportional to the threat and the workload. These new Guidelines and Standards, incorporating the lessons learned from the Ames, Nicholson and Pitts espionage cases, should be fully implemented, which cannot occur with inadequate resources. I believe that security programs are not, in total, a very expensive part of our national security budget. Therefore, in implementing these new Guidelines and Standards, you should ensure that sufficient attention is given to budgeting for the requirements contained therein.

I also wish to reemphasize the importance of reciprocity in government-wide security practices (including classified contractors). While the provisions of the Guidelines and Standards should be continuously reviewed for efficiency, lowering them in the name of monetary savings could be false economy.

Thank you, the Board, the Security Policy Forum and the Committees, for your hard work in formulating the first uniform Guidelines and Standards for government-wide security background investigations.

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Samuel Berger
Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs

Attachments

Tab A Final Adjudicative Guidelines

Tab B Final Temporary Eligibility Standards

Tab C Final Investigative Standards

